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Washington Goes to War: The Extraordinary Story of the Transformation of a City and a Nation

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ment, waste, and fraud (with names, dates, and particulars) that it leaves an indelible impression that much is amiss in DoD. If its allegations are valid, then it is high time to clean house in the defense establishment (although experience indicates this would be an extremely difficult task). We should rise in righteous indignation that the military personnel who put their lives on the line in combat must do so with inferior and costly systems because we tolerate a defense acquisition process that operates on a "smoke and mirrors" basis.

Fitzgerald addresses problems associated with the C-5A program (the source of his original whistle blowing), the B-1 bomber, the F-5 and F-16 fighter aircraft, spare parts for the Phoenix missile, and major defense contractor bribes and kickbacks. He even documents such abuses, as General Dynamics charging for boarding a dog in the travel expenses of one of its executives.

The tone of this book is so vitriolic that I view its perspective with suspicion, but we dare not ignore the problems that it identifies. It reminds us of the need for "trouble-making" whistle blowers who will keep us from complacency and disregard of systemic problems.

D.K. PACE
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Brinkley, David. *Washington Goes to War: The Extraordinary Story of the*

Transformation of a City and a Nation.
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York.
1988. 286pp. \$18.95

David Brinkley has performed a needed service in capturing the flavor of wartime Washington in the turbulent days leading up to the Second World War. Some of the messages from that time are relevant today as our country strives to be comfortable with the mantle of world leadership. Once again the lesson is emphasized that history is made by people, who embody enormous capacities for vision and self-sacrifice and for myopia and the pursuit of selfish goals.

Washington in the mid-thirties was a bucolic Southern town with all of the class distinctions, tolerances, and intolerances that were the hallmark of the post-Civil War South. Social mores were the province of the "cave dwellers" on upper Connecticut Ave. and on Massachusetts Ave. Taxicab zones were gerrymandered—and still are—to minimize commuting costs for congressmen. Washington, then as now, was resistant to change. Brinkley points out that men of action from the very beginning of the Republic found Washington hard to understand. Most military officers can relate to that.

This book is about change, about the process of "moving mountains" that began with the New Deal of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and was accelerated by Pearl Harbor. It sketches the good, the bad, and the ugly as well as the hilarity and bathos involved in the metamorphosis of the

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city and the country. It is a story of leadership, with numerous examples of political skill and raw political courage. The modern era likes to use sports metaphors; some of the early wartime planners wrote the book on such arts as “hardball” and “stonewalling.” Brinkley introduces masters of deviousness and duplicity—and effectiveness.

Much of the charm of this best-seller is its readability. It is a series of vignettes skillfully woven together to form the message. For example, Brinkley credits Roosevelt’s magical rapport with the American people to his ability to “state his thoughts in simple, homely phrases, in the language of the working neighborhood.” Brinkley provides concrete illustration with Roosevelt’s words that introduced the Lend-Lease Program in 1940. Senator Taft’s response is also instructive: “Lending arms is like lending chewing gum. You don’t want it back.”

Given the current renaissance of interest in mobilization and industrial preparedness, the reader so oriented will particularly enjoy the chapter entitled “Bureaucracies at War,” which provides insight into Roosevelt’s management style: “He . . . only wanted to make the great, historic decisions, yet he was always reluctant to delegate power to those who could relieve him of tedious details. And so issues remained unsettled until they became more troublesome, more expensive, and finally had to be dealt with, usually hurriedly.” The recipe

for action seemed to be the application to the “civilian economy of the old philosophy of the U.S. Army—if enough men and weapons are poured into a confused battle situation, an enemy can be overwhelmed rather than defeated.” The modern question is, Can we find enough resources to follow this recipe?

Brinkley notes the frustration of young officers who attempted to awaken their superiors to the growing German threat. “They seemed busy with the details of their office. They didn’t seem to grasp what I was trying to bring out.” Sound familiar?

The mobilization of the late thirties was one of the greatest logistics miracles of all time. However, it was anything but smooth and orderly. As fast as one group would be established it would be dissolved, so as to diffuse power. The president wanted neither the military nor industry to be in charge of resource allocation. He wanted no “czars” or “poobahs.” Today there are two executive orders in the process of final coordination that seek to assign emergency preparedness responsibility. Will they work? Can they be implemented? Stay tuned. Many of the same forces are at work today as in 1940.

Brinkley recounts the chaos of the various alphabet-soup agencies and the charges of profiteering that led to the Truman Committee’s investigation of defense procurement and contracting fraud. How much better is our current defense system’s acquisition process?

Present issues have recent antecedents. The military reader would be well advised to stock his library with some historical material so as to obtain perspective without having to relive past experience. *Washington Goes to War* could certainly be a valuable addition to this library.

AL BOTTOMS
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Hynes, Samuel. *Flights of Passage*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1988. 270pp. \$16.95

"Every generation is a secret society. The secret that my generation—the one that came of age during the Second World War—shared was simply the war itself. We grew up on active duty."

Samuel Hynes was eighteen when he became a naval aviation cadet in 1943; by the time he was twenty-one, he had flown a hundred combat missions as a Marine TBM pilot. Now a professor of literature at Princeton University, he has given us a remarkably engaging memoir of his secret society.

His is the classic story of a young man's passage from the gentle world of the upper Midwest in the 1930's through the masculine bonding of flight training and life in a training squadron and then to the grinding reality of air combat. Hynes grew up in a comfortable and secure world where teenage boys hung around the local airport absorbing the romance of aviation. Joining the Marines, he

joyfully discovered and reveled in the pleasures of flying, drinking and chasing girls. With the boundless energy of a young pilot, he pursued all three without favor or discrimination. Squadron life in California was a long fraternity party, with flying as an added benefit.

The war in the Pacific was another matter: enormously boring and dangerous. Hynes quickly became a careful and cagey pilot, a survivor who grew up fast. He had a typical war, earning a couple of medals, losing some friends, having some close scrapes and discovering that war is not all that it is advertised to be. There was neither glory nor bonhomie in the war.

Hynes' descriptions of flying capture that special sense of oneness that can exist between a pilot and his aircraft. After all, a high performance aircraft is the best toy that can be given to a young man of spirit. Read his account of being aloft with a buddy in a pair of F6F's on a glorious Pacific day with nothing to do but play at inverted formation flying.

Hynes tells his story with the immediacy and perspective of a young man sharing a grand adventure while growing up. He seems to have been a genuine Willie Keith.

FRANK C. MAHNCKE
Naval Surface Warfare Center

Durch, William J. *The ABM Treaty and Western Security*. Cambridge,